

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 14, 2021

3:33 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Joshua Revak, Chair  
Senator Peter Micciche, Vice Chair  
Senator Gary Stevens  
Senator Natasha von Imhof  
Senator Jesse Kiehl  
Senator Scott Kawasaki

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Click Bishop

**OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT**

Representative Mike Cronk

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

**CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)**

Big Game Commercial Services Board  
Martin Boniek - Glennallen

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Game  
Jerry Burnett - Juneau  
Stanley Hoffman - Bethel  
Jacob Fletcher - Palmer  
Lynn Keogh Jr. - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

JACOB FLETCHER, Appointee

Board of Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Talkeetna, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

LYNN KEOGH JR., Appointee

Board of Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

STANLEY L. HOFFMAN Jr., Appointee

Board of Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

JERRY BURNETT, Appointee

Board of Game

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Board of Game.

MARTIN BONIEK, Appointee

Big Game Commercial Services Board

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Glennallen, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as appointee to the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

ROD ARNO, Policy Director

Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC)

Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** On behalf of AOC, testified in support of all Governor Dunleavy's appointments to the Board of Game.

KENNY BARBER, representing self

Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the appointments of Lynn Keogh Jr. and Stanley Hoffman Jr. to the Board of Game.

JIM KOWALSKY, Chair

Alaskans for Wildlife (AFW)

Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

MARK RICHARDS, Executive Director  
Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHA)  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to the appointments of Lynn Keogh Jr. and Jacob Fletcher to the Board of Game.

KNEELAND TAYLOR, representing self  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

LORRAINE TEMPLE, representing self  
Cooper Landing, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

WAYNE KUBAT, Vice President  
Alaska Professional Hunter Association (APHA)  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the current appointments to the Board of Game and the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

NICOLE SCHMITT, Executive Director  
Alaska Wildlife Alliance (AWA)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

JACOB BARRETTE, representing self  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:33:13 PM](#)

**CHAIR JOSHUA REVAK** called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Kawasaki, Kiehl, Stevens, and Chair Revak. Senator Micciche arrived soon thereafter.

CHAIR REVAK recognized that Representative Cronk was in the audience.

#### **CONFIRMATION HEARING(S)**

Board of Game  
Big Game Commercial Services Board

[3:33:50 PM](#)

CHAIR REVAK announced the consideration of Governor's Appointees to the Board of Game and the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

He stated that the primary function of the Board of Game is to conserve and develop Alaska's game resources. The board is charged with making allocative decisions and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is responsible for management based on those decisions.

CHAIR REVAK asked Jacob Fletcher to provide a brief background and tell the committee about his interest in serving on the Board of Game.

[3:35:27 PM](#)

JACOB FLETCHER, Appointee, Board of Game, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Talkeetna, Alaska, related that he and his wife own a big game guiding business that primarily operates on Kodiak Island in the spring and fall. In the summer he works as a jet boat operator and in the winter he works for a kennel. He and his family are avid outdoors people who predominantly consume wild game. For more than 20 years he has worked as a packer, assistant guide, and a registered guide, so he is familiar with the implementation of game regulations in the field. He committed to work hard to be a conscientious and effective member of the Board of Game.

[3:36:33 PM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE joined the committee.

CHAIR REVAK asked him to address the concern that the board is weighted in favor of commercial interests.

MR. FLETCHER responded that he is first and foremost a resident hunter, and he is also a guide. He offered his belief that there was a big difference between a registered guide who operates and signs contracts in the field and the kind of guide he is or somebody who holds an assistant guide license or a class A assistant guide license.

[3:38:40 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked what issues or initiatives he planned to pursue as a member of the board.

MR. FLETCHER answered he did not have a specific issue to pursue at this time, but he would rely on the advisory committees.

CHAIR REVAK thanked him for being willing to serve. He asked Lynn Keogh Jr. to provide a brief background and tell the committee about his interest in serving on the Board of Game.

[3:40:59 PM](#)

LYNN KEOGH JR., Appointee, Board of Game, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage, Alaska, stated that he and his wife have owned and operated a fishing charter company on the Kenai Peninsula for more than 30 years. He commercial shrimps in Prince William Sound in the spring and he is a registered hunting guide. He clarified that he has not contracted hunts for more than 20 years. He does one hunt every fall for supplementary income and to cover licensing costs. He traps in the winter and was chair of the Southcentral Alaska Trappers Association for 10 years. He believes in resident opportunity. He has no wildlife violations but he did have a motor violation on the Kenai River in 2007 and a second for violating his commercial operator permit. Both citations were related to the same incident; he pleaded no contest and paid the fine. He relayed that he had attended and participated in Board of Game meetings since he first attended with his father.

[3:42:54 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked what issues or initiatives he planned to pursue as a member of the board.

MR. KEOGH answered that he would represent the resource first and users second, starting with subsistence, followed by resident then nonresident if there was a harvestable surplus.

[3:43:31 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL remarked that order of operation would be a dramatic shift in a number of hunts. He asked if he would propose that on a statewide basis or in particular areas.

MR. KEOGH replied it would be case-by-case.

SENATOR KIEHL commented on the number of emails from constituents in opposition to having additional guides. He asked Mr. Keogh how he sees the balance of interests on the Board of Game and his role in that, should he be confirmed.

MR. KEOGH offered his belief that diversity on the board is very important. He described his guiding as minimal, often consisting of just one moose hunt in the fall.

3:46:06 PM

SENATOR KIEHL asked if he thought that point of view was underrepresented on the board today.

MR. KEOGH answered he would not necessarily represent that point of view. Rather, he would be representing resident hunters and trappers and subsistence users. He stated that he participates in those activities far more than as a hunting guide.

CHAIR REVAK thanked him for being willing to serve. He asked Stanley Hoffman to provide a brief background and tell the committee about his interest in continuing to serve on the Board of Game.

3:47:31 PM

STANLEY L. HOFFMAN Jr., Appointee, Board of Game, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Bethel, Alaska, stated that he was born and raised on the Kuskokwim River, first in McGrath and later in Bethel. His family relies on subsistence hunting and fishing as their main source of food. In the past, he was a registered assistant guide and commercial fisherman, but not now that he lives and works in Bethel. He is honored to have served on the Board of Game since 2008. His life and work experience have given him a well-rounded perspective to represent Alaskans on this board. He appreciates the need for clear policies and responsible regulations, as well as the importance of having a veteran on the board who can speak with firsthand knowledge about past board actions. He has a broad perspective and he enjoys listening to the committee, the department, and the public on all aspects of game issues.

3:49:33 PM

SENATOR MICCICHE asked if he was related to Senator Lyman Hoffman.

MR. HOFFMAN replied Senator Hoffman is his father's cousin.

CHAIR REVAK asked what one of the biggest challenges he has faced during his tenure on the board and how he dealt with it.

MR. HOFFMAN answered Unit 13, part of which is the community hunt, has been a large challenge since 2008. Another challenge has been the decline in the size of caribou herds.

3:52:03 PM

SENATOR MICCICHE referenced the letters he had received in opposition to more registered guides on the board, and asked why there was resistance to the balance and how it affects board actions. He noted that none of the complaints were lodged against Mr. Hoffman.

MR. HOFFMAN related that he was a registered assistant guide for about 20 years after he moved to Bethel, primarily as a way to return to the McGrath country and spend time with his friends. He no longer holds that license. To the question of balance, he said he understands the complaints but employment is limited and it is logical that applicants to the board will be people like himself who have been or still are in the industry. He said he did not view that as a drawback and he had not seen that a guide perspective dominated board decisions.

CHAIR REVAK thanked Mr. Hoffman for his continued interest in serving. He asked Jerry Burnett to provide a brief background and tell the committee about his interest in continuing to serve on the Board of Game.

3:55:47 PM

JERRY BURNETT, Appointee, Board of Game, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Juneau, Alaska, acknowledged that many legislators were familiar with him from his time working for the legislature and/or the Department of Revenue (DOR). He related that he started hunting and fishing with his father and brothers and more recently with his son. For about 25 years he has been heavily involved with the Alaska Outdoor Council and the Territorial Sportsmen in Juneau for about 25 years. He was appointed to the board in 2019 and is the board representative on the Big Game Commercial Services Board. He asked the committee for its support for his nomination.

3:57:01 PM

SENATOR STEVENS commented that he always liked working with Mr. Burnett when he was with DOR and he appreciates that he continues to be involved since he retired. He thanked him for his service.

3:57:32 PM

CHAIR REVAK thanked Mr. Burnett. He turned to the appointments to the Big Game Commercial Services Board and stated the function of this board is to license and regulate the activities

of providers of commercial services to the big game hunters in the interest of the state's wildlife resources.

CHAIR REVAK asked Marten Boniek to provide a brief background and tell the committee about his interest in serving on the Big Game Commercial Services Board.

3:58:49 PM

MARTIN BONIEK, Appointee, Big Game Commercial Services Board, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Glennallen, Alaska, stated that he and his family own and operate an air taxi and transporter service, primarily flying in Game Management Units 11, 12, and 13 from Talkeetna into the Alaska Range and down to the Chugach Range. He has been hunting and trapping since he was 10 and he has a driving interest in keeping the resource sustainable. Responding to a question posed to other nominees, he said his agenda is to encourage cooperation and find a compromise between resident hunters and the guide services. He noted that the only other transporter on the board is a marine transporter and he believes it is important for air taxi transporters such as himself to be represented as well.

CHAIR REVAK thanked him for being willing to serve.

4:00:58 PM

At ease

4:02:40 PM

CHAIR REVAK reconvened the meeting and opened public testimony. He suggested everyone submit their written testimony to [sres@akleg.gov](mailto:sres@akleg.gov).

4:04:15 PM

ROD ARNO, Policy Director, Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC), Palmer, Alaska, stated that on behalf of the 10,000 AOC members who hunt, trap, fish, and recreate on public land in Alaska, he was speaking in support of all the governor's nominees. They are qualified to scrutinize and adopt ADF&G management plans and allocate harvestable surplus of game. He thanked the nominees for being willing to engage in what is often a contentious process.

MR. ARNO said AOC strongly supports Lynn Keogh Jr. He is a lifetime Alaska resident hunter with years of trapping experience. Importantly, he spends time in the field. He refuted statements by his detractors, calling them unfounded based on Mr. Keogh's record.



On behalf of AOC, he stated support for Stanley Hoffman Jr. who has been a strong advocate for conservation and the use of game by rural residents as a food source. After that he supports the harvest of game by other hunters as a surplus is available. He is willing to participate in the state allocative process when many rural residents have abandoned it in favor of the federal system that gives a priority.

Jerry Burnett understands the process and how the legislature has delegated authority to the board.

Jacob Fletcher is the Alaska Professional Hunters Association choice to represent a professional big game guide industry. He opined that it would make no sense to have an Alaska Board of Game without a representative from the big game guide industry.

MR. ARNO asked the committee to support these qualified Alaskans who have volunteered to serve on the Board of Game.

CHAIR REVAK noted that Mr. Arno had contacted his office to request additional time for his testimony

[4:09:24 PM](#)

CHAIR REVAK recognized that Senator von Imhof joined the committee some time ago.

[4:09:45 PM](#)

KENNY BARBER, representing self, Palmer, Alaska, stated he has known Lynn Keogh Jr. for 20 years and he supports him 100 percent. They spent two years together on a committee that looked at trapping on trails in the Anchorage area. He refuted the things in the newspaper and online that were said about Mr. Keogh. He does not know Stanley Hoffman Jr. very well, but he respects what he has to say.

[4:11:09 PM](#)

JIM KOWALSKY, Chair, Alaskans for Wildlife (AFW), Fairbanks, Alaska, stated that he has been in the Fairbanks area for 50 years and he pays attention to what goes on. He cited AS 16.05.221(b) that requires a diversity of interests and points of view in the membership of the Board of Game. Despite being passed by the legislature and signed by the governor, he said this statute has been largely ignored. He urged the committee to follow the law so the board is a board of game and not a board of trappers and hunters. He pointed out that art. VIII Constitution of the State of Alaska is clear that all Alaskans

are stakeholders, and as stakeholders they require a diverse Board of Game.

MR. KOWALSKY stated that AFW is strongly opposed to the appointment Lynn Keogh Jr. He maintained the governor did not do his job when he nominated consumptive users. He concluded his comments citing a study by Eco Northwest in 2011 that points out the economic benefits of non-consumptive users as opposed to the consumptive users of wildlife resources.

[4:15:33 PM](#)

MARK RICHARDS, Executive Director, Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHA), Fairbanks, Alaska, stated he was testifying on behalf of the 3,000 RHA members from across the state who are opposed to the addition of two more guides to the Board of Game. These appointments are Lynn Keogh Jr. and Jacob Fletcher. He referenced RHA's April 12, 2021 letter that highlights two examples of continued bias on the Board of Game in favor of commercial hunting interests. The first was the Kodiak Brown Bear draw permit system that was unconstitutional per art. VII Constitution of the State of Alaska. RHA filed a lawsuit because up to 40 percent of these permits are allocated to nonresident guided hunters who, unlike resident hunters, are not required to go through the permit system. Instead, they pay \$20,000 plus and sign an agreement with a guide and pick up an over the counter permit in Kodiak. The same is true for other draw hunts such as a moose draw hunt where the Board of Game has allocated 50 percent of the hunts to nonresidents. He said this dynamic needs to change, and adding two more guides to the board is going in the wrong direction. He highlighted that the 100,000 Alaska residents who purchase annual hunting licenses contribute over \$1 billion to the economy, whereas resident guides make up less than 1 percent of resident hunters. If two more guides are confirmed, he said it will cement commercial interests over resident hunters.

MR. RICHARDS clarified that RHA was opposing Mr. Keogh and Mr. Fletcher solely because they hold guide licenses. He urged the committee to oppose the appointments.

[4:18:33 PM](#)

KNEELAND TAYLOR, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, stated he opposes the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game in part because of his dealings with him years ago on a Board of Game subcommittee. He explained that the purpose of the subcommittee was to bring trappers and non-trappers together to try to find consensus on measures to reduce the killing and

maiming of dogs on popular hiking trails in the Anchorage area. The committee was evenly split between trappers and non-trappers, and the chair was a member of the Board of Game. Mr. Keogh was difficult both personally and substantively. He made derogatory personal comments about the non-trappers and on a substantive level he opposed all measures that might restrict the freedom of trappers to place traps anywhere they chose, including placing a 330 conibear trap next to a developed trail in Chugach State Park. He would only support signs to warn dog owners to watch for traps. The subcommittee never reached consensus on any changes and the Board of Game has made no changes in the area for the past 20 years. The people who wanted change were forced to go through the municipal assembly.

MR. TAYLOR urged the committee to vote no on the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game.

4:21:51 PM

LORRAINE TEMPLE, representing self, Cooper Landing, Alaska, stated she is a 37 year resident of the Kenai Peninsula, a member of the Cooper Landing Advisory Committee, a business owner, a boat captain, and a back country guide. She voiced grave concerns about the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game. She offered her view that he exhibited a lack of respect and integrity in past business operations, and had multiple infractions. The Board of Game is an important regulatory body that needs its members to be of the highest character possible. Mr. Keogh does not exhibit these qualities, she said. Rather, his actions have been self-serving and disrespectful of the area he operates in. She said the state's wilderness areas and resources are enjoyed by a variety of public user groups and any regulations should reflect this diversity. She offered her view that the Board of Game does not reflect this diversity and the appointment of Mr. Keogh would further weight the board in favor of hunting and trapping instead of an equal weighting of all user groups, including recreational users.

MS. TEMPLE pointed out that even though the percentage of trappers statewide is just 0.04 percent of the population, they are able to set their traps close to trails, potentially endangering or fatally harming dogs. This is a burden on winter enthusiasts, dog lovers, and families with small children. She said the Alaska Trappers Association seems to disregard this danger, and she does not feel Mr. Keogh would have an objective and healthy opinion on the trap setback issues that are

currently in the spotlight. He does not seem to recognize recreational users at all.

4:24:16 PM

WAYNE KUBAT, Vice President, Alaska Professional Hunter Association (APHA), Wasilla, Alaska, stated APHA supports the reappointment of Jerry Burnett, Stanley Hoffman Jr., Lynn Keogh Jr., and Jacob Fletcher to the Board of Game. They will bring their unique points of view and statewide experience to the board. They have proven to be accessible to the public and willing to listen to all sides of an issue before making the best decision possible on wildlife issues. He disputed the claim that there were too many guides on the Board of Game or that they held a bias one way or another.

On behalf of APHA, he stated support for Ely Cyrus and Martin Boniek to the Big Game Commercial Services Board. Their contributions during the March meeting were impressive. He asked the committee to support these appointments.

4:26:07 PM

NICOLE SCHMITT, Executive Director, Alaska Wildlife Alliance (AWA), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that on behalf of the hundreds of AWA members across the state, many of whom are resident hunters, she was testifying in opposition to the appointment of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game. She cited two main reasons. First, is the issue of diversity. She pointed out that the Alaska Trappers Association and trappers generally are well represented on the Board of Game by Allen Barrette. Should Mr. Keogh be confirmed, approximately one-third of the board would represent the 2,000-3,000 trappers in the state when they are just 0.02 percent of all registered hunters and .004 percent of the population of Alaska.

MS. SCHMITT said the second concern relates to the way predator control has been implemented in the state. She explained that during the Board of Game meeting on the Kenai Peninsula in 2011/2012, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) attributed low moose numbers to habitat and few bearing cows. Wolf predation was not mentioned as a key reason for the decline, yet Mr. Keogh voted in favor of wolf control in Game Management Unit 15C and aerial wolf hunting. She noted he was questioned about his vote during his [unsuccessful] bid for confirmation later in the year. She also cited earlier testimony about how Mr. Keogh works with resource users with whom he does not agree. She encouraged the committee to consider diversity

when is makes a decision about who should have a seat on this powerful board.

4:29:29 PM

JACOB BARRETTE, representing self, Fairbanks, Alaska, stated he was calling to voice support for the appointment and confirmation of Lynn Keogh Jr. to the Board of Game. He maintained that Mr. Keogh would keep the interests of Alaskans as a top priority, as he has demonstrated in the past. He countered the claim that his professional license was a drawback, offering his view that it adds to the wealth of knowledge at the table.

4:30:13 PM

CHAIR REVAK closed public testimony.

He asked Mr. Keogh if he would like to respond to any of the testimony he heard about his nomination.

4:30:43 PM

MR. KEOGH replied that he had read much of the testimony, primarily from resident hunters, in opposition to his appointment. He said his takeaway is that he is regarded as qualified and that the opposition was to a "piece of paper that I hold." He was mystified why some people might think he would not be able to represent a resident's interest on the Board of Game. He cited his voting record as proof that he represents the interests of Alaskans.

CHAIR REVAK thanked him for being willing to serve.

MR. KEOGH referenced previous testimony about his behavior when he served on "a trap and trail committee about 20 years ago." He recalled that the committee did reach consensus and that while he stood his ground he was not disrespectful.

CHAIR REVAK found no questions or comments and solicited a motion.

4:33:57 PM

SENATOR MICCICHE moved to forward the following named appointees for the Board of Game to a joint session of the full legislature for further consideration.

Board of Game

Jacob Fletcher - [Palmer]

Lynn Keogh Jr. - Anchorage

Stanley L. Hoffman - Bethel  
Jerry Burnett - Juneau

[4:34:16 PM](#)

CHAIR REVAK found no objection and the motion passed. He solicited a second motion.

[4:34:24 PM](#)

SENATOR MICCICHE moved to forward the following named appointees for the Big Game Commercial Services Board to a joint session of the full legislature for further consideration.

Big Game Commercial Services Board

Martin Boniek - Glennallen

CHAIR REVAK found no objection and the motion passed.

[4:34:44 PM](#)

CHAIR REVAK stated in accordance with AS 39.05.080, a signature on this report does not reflect an intent by any member to vote either for or against the confirmation of the individuals in any further sessions.

[4:35:28 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Revak adjourned the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting at 4:35 p.m.